

Nation

Back to School Issue



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AIDS: infecting our people at an alarming rate

by Steve Bonspiel

The biggest misconception when it comes to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, or AIDS, is the fact that you are safe from it and that you could not possibly contract the disease. Well, you're dead wrong, especially if you happen to be Native.

A recent report talked about the rates Aboriginals contract AIDS and compared them to the rates of our non-native counterparts. The numbers are staggering. Aboriginals number less than 4 per cent of Canada's total population, yet we account for 16.4 per cent of reported AIDS cases.

Chief Angus Toulouse, the Ontario Regional Chief-Chair of the Assembly of First Nations, announced those numbers during the 16th International AIDS Conference in Toronto in mid-August.

"This is a 500-per-cent increase over the past 20 years, compared to a 24 per cent decrease in the general Canadian-born population," he said.

Until 1993, reported cases of Aboriginal infection was around 2 per cent of reported cases in Canada. That number soared to 14.4 per cent by 2003.

The question is, what do we do about it?

Gone are the days where the false assumption of the general population was that only homosexuals or intravenous drug users had to worry about the debilitating disease. In reality, our sons and daughters (or mothers or fathers for that matter) are at as much risk as anyone else in the community.

Abstinence is the number-one preventive tactic, obviously, but human nature dictates that condoms are a close second.

Think of what would happen if an AIDS epidemic broke out in Eeyou Istchee. It's a disease that can decimate a population in a matter of years, especially with the lack of health professionals Cree communities have at their disposal. Aboriginal people haven't seen a disease

this scary since we first encountered smallpox.

In fact, we don't know at this point how many people do have AIDS and in which communities. It would be unwise to think, because of their small size, it won't come to communities like Eastmain or Nemaska.

It's a problem that should always be on our minds, especially before sex with a partner, casual or otherwise. Although there have been major breakthroughs in anti-retroviral drugs that enable people to live longer with the disease, it does not represent a sort of carte blanche for people to be foolish and unsafe.

A major way to fight infections of Aboriginal peoples is to attack the ignorance of the disease in the general public. More public awareness campaigns, free condoms and safe places for drug users to go to inject with clean needles might be a start.

After all, 59 per cent of new cases among Aboriginals from 1998 to 2004 were because of dirty or shared needles.

To top it all off, the Conservative government's approach isn't helping matters.

The Liberals made a \$5.1 billion commitment at the First Ministers Meeting in Kelowna, BC, last November to help bring Aboriginal living standards in line with other Canadians over the next 10 years. That number included \$1.3 billion in new health investments to deal with AIDS prevention. The Conservative government quickly turned around and slashed that number to less than \$400 million over the same period.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's message is that the health and well being of Aboriginals are not a priority during his tenure. This is a sad message to send to the first peoples of this country.

If Harper doesn't see your future as a priority, make sure you do.

So if you're going to have sex ladies, tell him to put a condom on. Guys, be a man and wear one.

Contents

editorial

Abo AIDS data is a killer 3

rez notes

Beam me up, Scotty 4

news

New CSB Chairman 5

Cree lawyer to be 7

features

Education special 10

The facts on FAS 19

Under the Northern Sky

A treaty's first century 23



on the cover

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Talk is no longer cheap



As an avid Star Trek fan since childhood (I even made a model starship, only to find out years later that it was a Klingon ship), I often wondered whether or not those neat items like the Tri-corder would ever come to be in the real world. Well, what do you know, everyone seems to have a Tri-corder these days within their PDA or cell phone, ready to beam important information (like a picture of someone you just met) to another eager communicator.

Strangely enough, the ordinary, hard-wired phones are now silent yet everyone is talking on their cells to other people who have cells and the cacophony is deafening.

It was bad enough when people who barely knew you tried to talk to you about their problems or whatnot, but to have them call you on your cell... oohh, how dare they.

Now privacy is nonexistent and yet everyone is talking to someone somewhere and intimacy is measured by the minute.

Gone are the days of useless yakking for hours on end about nothing in particular. Today, the code is "I got to watch my minutes" and calls are brief, except for the angst-ridden teens talking among themselves. The cell phone is now available in some Cree communities to anyone with a good credit record and a substantial deposit.

Cell phones can be taken for granted, however, and should be used wisely and sparingly. I think that message should be attached to all cell phone boxes, much like the warning



by
Sonny Orr

labels on cigarette packages, warning users of their potential for financial abuse if used on a regular basis.

In comparison, I remember back in the day when the HF radio was standard Bell equipment and some gum-chewing operator could be called upon on occasion to assist in interpreting the message through the snap, crackle and pop of the static.

Another means to communicate was the other HF system available in most towns with a runway, at the local Austin Airways or Fecteau Airways dispatch office for general emergencies, and also, to get the weather forecasts. However one chose to communicate, the message still got out, albeit rather slowly.

To back up even further in time, letter writing was once the only way to hear from loved ones who left for school or work.

Some people would come to our house with their mail and letters and they would hear from their family through my mother. She would often write back on flimsy blue sheets of paper, which was readily marked as airmail and apply the penny stamp with a careful but icky lick. I think that stamps now are flavored and the awful bodily shudder resulting from tasting dried horse gut that made the stamp sticky enough to affix the image of Queen Elizabeth to anything is thankfully long gone.

Since that era, this new millennium baby boom has sprouted hordes of teens addicted to chat lines. Although we may now know where they are at nights, teenagers still continue the time-honored tradition of rebellion against their parents by opting for all-night chat fests (if the server works) instead of the long, all-night healthy walks around town.

Times, they are-a changing, once again. But some things just don't, they're just clothed differently and give a new language, a language that is still in the works, e-talk.

Perhaps one day, e-talk will be the new universal language.

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Canada

Gordon Blackned elected new CSB Chairman

by Steve Bonspiel

Brings ambitious program of change into new mandate

The people decided it was a time for a change.

Voters from the nine Cree communities elected new Cree School Board Chairman Gordon Blackned, the Director General of the CSB, to replace incumbent William Mianscum during a run-off election in early August.

Blackned took 1,350 votes to Mianscum's 846 to win a three-year term.

The new chairperson was excited when *the Nation* caught up with him.

"It's a good feeling," he said. "I think what I was looking for was some relief from all the management and administrative responsibilities. I've been there [as Director General] for over 10 years and it was time for me to move on to something else. My passion has always been Cree education and for me I think that was the direction I wanted to move."

Deputy Director General Abraham Jolly will act as the interim Director General until a permanent replacement can be found.

Blackned was nominated three years ago to run for Chairman, but he declined, citing a need to put at least a few more years' energy into the Director General's position.

"I was looking at some of the things we had worked on within the Cree

School Board, more on the area of the three-year pedagogical plan. I wanted to see through that plan and the necessary follow up," he said.

Blackned, who is originally from Waskaganish, received his teaching degree at McGill University and has held many education-related positions in Eeyou Istchee over the years, including as a

"What I propose to do is focus on improving the schools and increasing the students success and achievement"

teacher, principal and an almost 11-year tenure as DG.

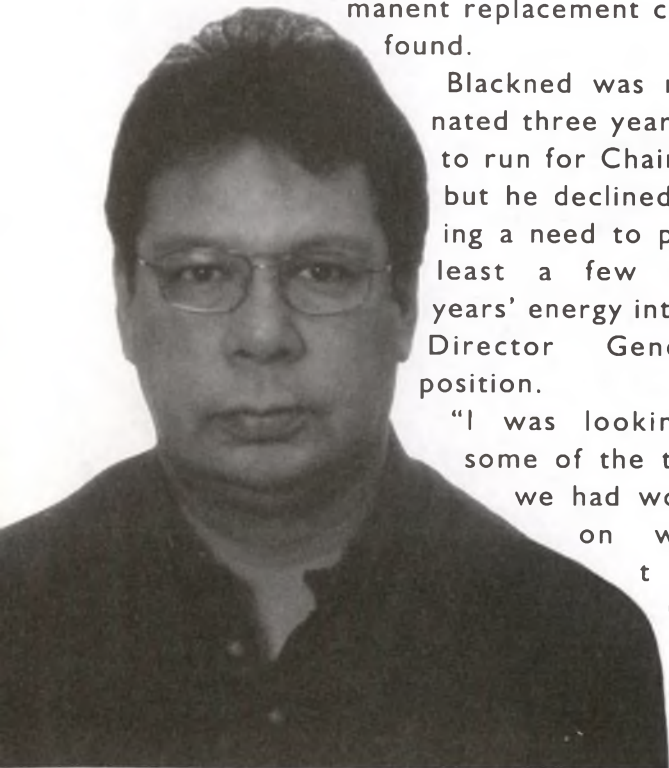
"What I propose to do is focus on improving the schools and increasing the students' success and achievement. I feel that the students need to have more focus in terms of delivery of the services they're getting in the schools. Although it is good now, I think we need to move forward and upgrade that focus and try to achieve a higher success rate within the Cree School Board."

Blackned also talked about being more visible within the communities so people can "put a name with a face."

Blackned said that one way to improve the educational experience of young Crees is to seek out more Cree teachers.

"I am thinking of making the schools more Cree. We're moving away from that area. I don't want to put down the non-native teachers and principal, but I think that, more and more, the schools are pushing aside the Cree culture and language aspect of Cree education. The quality of the language and culture is diminishing," said

continued on page 9





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Cree lawyer-to-be is on a mission to help her people

by Steve Bonspiel

As the Cree Nation continues to grow, so too do the hopes and dreams of its young people.

Marie Eve Lachapelle-Bordeleau, 24, is a prime example. She recently passed the Quebec bar exam and is now hoping to help her own people.

"I decided to study law because I wanted to [eventually] work in Aboriginal law," said Lachapelle-Bordeleau. "I want to work for my Nation."

Although she grew up in Senneterre, her connection to her home community of Waswanipi has always been strong.

"My grandmother was living a real traditional life in the woods and at one point she was obligated to stop living that kind of life. She had to leave to live in a mixed world in Senneterre," she said, adding that she was born around the time the Cree Nation was morphing into a less nomadic society and building communities.

"I don't have a lot of contact with the people of Waswanipi, but my family still lives in the region."

Her childhood was a mix of both worlds, with a Cree father and mother who is Québécoise.

"When you're a kid you don't realize what is traditional Cree

and what's not. I remember my father picking up small game. I loved being outside with him. I was raised in traditional Cree a little bit, but since we were in Senneterre, I was mostly raised in that way," she said.

She realized at an early age that working for her people was a priority and she was going to do whatever it took to make it happen. "I want to work for my community and do something good. I figured becoming a lawyer and learning Aboriginal law would be a good thing for me."

That notion was heightened even more when she was accepted by the Aboriginal People Abroad Program to visit the Pacific Island nation of Fiji. She worked with the locals for six months in 2005 for the project that is funded by the Canadian government.

"It was amazing," she said. "I was working with an NGO called the Pacific Centre for Public Integrity as a legal advisor for transparency and good governance. It was such a great experience and it really helped me. "I was working with the Native people of Fiji and it made me miss my family. They had big issues about



constitutional and ethnic issues in Fiji. I knew I wanted to continue it, but in Canada.

"When I got back, I said to myself that I had to do the bar exam and I had to work for my community, it was so important for me."

There are many aspects in Fijian life that are similar to the Crees, she said, the most important of which is the sense of community.

She completed her Bachelors' degree at Laval University in 2004 and went on to study law at the École du Barreau du Québec, where she graduated last June.

continued on page 13

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Blackned, who also wants to see more activity out on the land rather than in the schools.

"That culture reinforces the language and we need to preserve and protect our Cree language. There needs to be more funding for that aspect of Cree education."

A Cree regime

He also addressed the sagging graduation rates and high absenteeism in many schools in Eeyou Istchee. While he said they are getting better, there still remains room for a large improvement, something Blackned blames on the differences in culture and language.

"When we talk about the education standards, we are talking about the standards of a foreign society or environment," said Blackned. "I think that at the school board we have the right to teach how we want to teach in our own schools. The past 30 years

school board; I may have some influence to change some of this."

Although Blackned sounded a bit harsh towards non-natives, his message was to empower more Cree educators and encourage them to go further.

"We still have a large number of non-natives working in education and health and social services. We need to replace them. There is so much

turnover. Some people are there for a few years and then they're gone. When we recruit Crees, they stay there for a long time.

"Right now we have a successful teacher-training program which we've had for 30 years. I went through that program myself. I started out as a teacher through Indian Affairs before education was handed over to the Cree School Board."

Blackned said that part of the solution in hiring more Cree educators is a new program currently under review. A couple years ago, the CSB introduced a course that certifies a teacher to teach at the secondary level, he said.

But the teacher-training program does not have that special certification, complained Blackned, who added that a current project, the reworking and upgrading of the teacher-training program, will qualify graduates over a four-year peri-

od to work in Eeyou Istchee as well as the rest of Canada.

"It's a very exciting project and we're looking forward to recruiting our first group of candidates this fall," he said.

"When Cree students move to non-native towns it's a culture shock to them. That affects their learning and they sometimes do not complete their programs down south. On the other hand,

when we have vocational or technical programs [in Eeyou Istchee] we have a very high rate of success. The teacher-training program, which is an accredited program, is one example of a high level of success."

Blackned questions why Crees do not pursue other programs, such as social work or in dentistry, which would qualify people to do the jobs non-natives now perform. "Those are the things that I want to try and put in place within Cree territory," Blackned emphasized.

"Cree education constantly needs to be reviewed and revised. We can't just say we developed something in 2000 and that's what we have to follow. Education changes day by day. Policies change, guidelines change, so we have to constantly change our plan. When we see the problems we have to make sure we address them and amend the plan accordingly."

"Cree education constantly needs to be reviewed and revised"

"That culture reinforces the language and we need to preserve and protect our Cree language"

we've been following the Ministry of Education of Quebec guidelines, or the Régime pédagogique, that's applied throughout the rest of Quebec. We haven't made any efforts to develop our own Cree Régime pédagogique. I've made statements to that effect and it's fallen on deaf ears. I am now as the chairman of the

Language skills key school success

feature

by Amy German

As the economy grows stronger in the North, so does its need for educated and skilled workers. In a growing economy, a good education can be more valuable than gold.

In the past, sadly, proper systems were not in place within the school systems to help Cree kids learn at the right level. That problem has contributed to high drop-out rates, and that fact has an undeniable impact on economic development.

"We discovered that some students were just being passed from grade to grade without the proper standard that they should be at," explains Dorothy Nicholls, the Vice-Principal at Mistissini's Voyager Elementary School. "We also discovered that [practice] in the younger grades; it goes back to kindergarten and Pre-K."

Another problem, notes Nicholls, is that, "most people feel that those grades [Pre-K and kindergarten] are not important. But they are extremely important – that is the learning centre right there, up to the age of seven years old. You can learn more language and learn how to speak fluently in a language if you learn before seven."

Language skills need to be grounded in children at a very early age, she adds. "If you don't ground students before then, you have a problem and it will travel right through the school system. You can have the best teachers in Grades 4 or 5 and 6 but if they don't ground it and root it in the classes before hand, they are not making it – those

a r e dropouts."

As mentioned, the problem was not simply with parents not sending their children to school early enough but there was also a problem with the approach taken with children at an early level. It

began with the methods teachers were using to teach Cree language skills.

"If you think of the transmission of a language, there are certain ways that you will learn a language. We can teach a child here in Pre-K Spanish but if the teacher doesn't know how to teach a language, you're in trouble. If they are just playing and they are just doing whatever, there is a way to teach them and once they are taught they can transmit that."

The standard for language skills simply was not high enough, Nicholls observes. Now, "they must pass with a minimum of 80 per cent in that language and that's mostly oral. Then there is the transmission. It can be



transmitted (Cree to English or French) into the second language. If it's lower than that – let's say 55 per cent, for example – and you move them on to kindergarten they will carry it through and once they hit Grade 3 there is nothing to transmit. It's zero."

To ameliorate the situation, a new program has been implemented within the school system. With two pilot projects in place, one in English and another in French, the situation seems to be getting better.

"Our pilot projects are growing a better crop of students," Nicholls asserts. "The first pilot project is now going into Grade 2. The children in there are fluent in Cree and in French and they speak English."

The second chance man

by Amy German

With a high drop-out rate often comes social and legal trouble. That is why for kids that have had such difficulty there are people like Gordon Hudson.

Hudson works for the Cree Health Board and is the regional director for Youth Healing Services. "Basically I take care of the group homes," says Hudson in describing his role. "I also take care of the reception centre – that's the young offenders' facility, which takes care of the Youth Criminal Justice Act."

Under a new mandate, however, he is available to any youth who needs his services within the nine communities.

A large aspect of Hudson's job is prevention; he works in conjunction with the public health agency on promoting self-esteem, anger management, healthy nutrition, education and reading and related issues for youth under 18. All of this is in an attempt to keep kids from falling into the justice system.

The key to his success with kids is motivation. "The biggest thing up here is that a lot of these kids have lost the abili-

ty to dream," says Hudson.

So he tries to show kids that staying in school is worth it by exposing them to some of the better things life has to offer if one gets an education. "What I have tried to do is institute role models because these kids all look up to sports people."

In the past year Hudson has taken groups of kids down to Ottawa to meet NHL superstar Jonathan Cheechoo for a motivational speech. He arranged similar trips to Toronto to have the kids meet with basketball stars Shaquille O'Neal and Steve Nash. But it's not all about sports. "When we went to Toronto we had a visit with the Lieutenant Governor and his literacy program and so it's all based on some kind of education," notes Hudson.

Throughout the year, Hudson is involved in running everything from hockey to football camps. Last year he ran his first ever cheerleading camp with some of the Montreal Alouettes cheerleaders. At the end of the camp, the children participating presented a cheer to everyone

and, says Hudson, "the smiles and the idea of accomplishment on those little kids' faces were incredible."

To reinforce the idea that school isn't such a bad thing, Hudson says he will be taking 200 kids down to Montreal for an Alouettes Game and to visit the Canada Space Centre, the Biodome and the Botanical Gardens.

His purpose is to whet the youth's appetites for learning. Says Hudson, "I want them to know that they can achieve anything they want in the world, they just have to work at it."

Gordon Hudson can be reached at Youth Healing Services, 418-923-3600.



Vocational school offers life solutions

by Amy German

Does your job give you the "blahs"? Are you thinking about changing careers? Have you ever aspired to learn a trade but didn't know where to start? If you have answered yes to any or all three of these questions, the Sabtuan Regional Vocational Training Centre in Waswanipi may have an answer for you.

Luc Colette is the education consultant for the vocational centre, "Everything is new here," says Colette, "it's a great organization and we have all new equipment."

The centre opened up back in 2002 and in a new building finished last year offers up a whole bevy of

trade programs. In the past they have offered carpentry, light vehicle mechanics, plumbing and heating, hairdressing, computer support and home care assistant programs. In September two more programs are opening up, professional cooking and secretarial studies.

To be eligible for the trade programs offered at the centre, prospective students must have a minimum of Secondary IV or an equivalent for admission to most of these programs. You also need to be a Cree beneficiary. If that is the case, funding is also provided, notes Colette. "We have what are called training allowances that come from the government and

they are available through Cree Human Resources Development."

This brand-spanking-new facility has everything one would need to get the education they want. Though the school can not hold more than 100 students, at one time, for 50 of those students housing is provided. "Some of our students are adults and some of which have dependents or spouses," says Colette.

With this in mind, the school has created various types of dwellings made to fit different individuals' needs. There are single-student units, married-couple units and single-family units that can house two adults and two children. "It's great

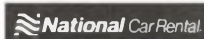
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Innu Chief re-elected

Controversial Innu leader Raphael Picard was re-elected to a third consecutive term as chief of the Innu Council of Pessamit (Betsiamites).

The election, held August 18, pitted Picard against rival Rene Simon, a man Picard defeated twice before.

Picard garnered 885 of 1,505 ballots cast while former chief Simon received 620 votes. Of the six band councillors elected, five are Picard supporters.

Picard is in the midst of launching an \$11 billion lawsuit against the Quebec government for what he calls the "illegal construction" of 13 hydro dams on Innu territory without their consent.

Whapmagoostui First Nation

New Chief & Council

Chief	Losty Mamianskum
Deputy Chief	Andrew George
Women's Seat	Rachel Sheshamush
Elder's Seat	Jimmy George
Youth Seat	Patricia Kawapit
Councilor	David Masty, Snr.
Councilor	Robbie Masty
Councilor	William Kawapit
Councilor	Robbie Kawapit

continued from page 7

After a six-month stage, she will be called to the bar and formally join the legal profession.

Getting to where she is today was an uphill struggle.

"It wasn't easy at all, it was very difficult. For four months I couldn't have a normal life. I studied six or seven days a week every evening. When I finished I was exhausted."

"I had to make a lot of sacrifices," she continued. "I had to move into a strange city for university, first of all. I was away from my family and friends and that was a big challenge for me. During those five years, I had to

remind myself of my goals and my dream, because if I didn't do that, I wouldn't be here right now. At times I was almost crying and I wanted to quit and leave Quebec and leave the university. I was 22 or 23 and it was so hard sometimes to be away and alone. But I had a dream and it's because of that that I didn't quit."

Despite the arduous schedule, Lachapelle-Bordeleau says it was all worth it.

"My mother helped me a lot. She wasn't living in Quebec, but when I had a hard time studying, she was always there for me to tell me to do it and that it was

worth it. My father was always there as well," she said about her parents, whom she credits as her two role models.

Although she speaks little Cree, she is hoping to learn, especially if she ends up in one of the communities some day.

When asked what advice she would give to a young person interested in studying law, she replied, "Go for it. At the end you'll have to make a lot of sacrifices, but it's so worth it. Anything you do in your life, there will always be difficulties and you'll always have to make sacrifices."



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Take note that, MARTHA ATKINSON, domiciled and residing at 100, Beesum Road in Chisasibi, province of Quebec, district of Abitibi, JOM 1EO, has presented to the DIRECTOR OF CIVIL STATUS an application for her name to be changed to MARTHA SAM. In which we have signed in Chisasibi, this July 31st, 2006. Me Veronique Frappier, lawyer.



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DRINK, DOPE AND THE DAMAGE DONE

by Amy German

Unborn children are hurt for life when pregnant parents party hard

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, the phenomenon of children born with birth defects as a result of a pregnant mother's consumption of alcohol, may have only come to the attention of Northern educators in recent years, but measures are now being taken to help these kids.

Says Dorothy Nicholls, Vice-Principal of Mistissini's Voyager Elementary School: "It's only in the last four to five years that we started to be aware that children had a problem. We did not know what it was because it was never diagnosed."

These children, says Nicholls, have "short atten-

tion spans and shortened memory spans – they were being taught something and had to have the same thing repeated within five to ten minutes."

Learning difficulties are a prime characteristic of FAS children. When the situation presented itself, Nicholls and her teaching staff were looking for answers, she says.

"So they [the teachers] went to a workshop last year and shared the things that they were aware of that was happening with some of their students," said Nicholls. "They realized it was fetal alcohol effects."

"The fact of the matter is that these children are different and have special needs," says Nicholls. "They are not retarded, but they are very agitated. We notice that they cannot sit still, they have to run around the classroom all the time and if it's misdiagnosed then the child is going through a rough time."

The Learning Associates of Montreal is a non-profit organization founded by a group of professionals dedicated to helping children, adolescents, adults and families cope with learning difficulties. The group has worked in consultation with the Cree School Board and the Cree community.

"We go to each community," says Learning Associates educator Fiona Hellstrom. "Once a year for the anglophone community and once a year for the francophone team but we are available and there is follow up through the special education services department."

When it comes to treatment, says Hellstrom, "We feel that it's very, very important for the parents to be informed as to what we are doing in the school and that they get to know us and that they feel com-





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fortable with us and that they can call us at any time if they have other questions and so we always meet with them."

She contends that some things need to be done differently for children with FAS in a classroom setting. Routine, says Hellstrom, is essential for FAS sufferers.

**"We did not know
what it was because it
was never diagnosed"**

"Structure usually helps those kinds of kids," she observes. "They [parents and teachers] may have to protect their kids when they are younger more than if the kids are sort of just going around in the community. They are going to have to do special things to make sure that their child is safe because if their child is very impulsive they can do things like jump from a tree or go in the water or do things so they often need more protection."

According to Barbara Bobrow, The Learning Associates' Coordinator of Professional Services, "socially they can be very vulnerable too because someone could talk them into things. So you have to protect them that way and they are not good with time and money."

However, says Barbrow, "The more support they get at an early age, the better. If you can teach routines and social skills, the kinds of things they have to do in daily life, the better it is for them."

Barbrow also suggests "giving them lots of warnings like, 'We are going to be going for recess.' They need to be pre-warned when things are going to change is one thing we can do. Then they don't have some of the upsets and the temper tantrums that can really cause disruption."

As a teacher and administrator, Dorothy Nicholls

**"socially they can be very vul-
nerable too because someone
could talk them into things"**

isn't sure if FAS children will ever be able to lead a normal life, "but at least we know how to deal with

them in a classroom now."

Nicholls is also concerned about prevention in the communities so that more children do not needlessly suffer, however. "We have some very young mothers in Grade 11 and 12," she notes. "Most of the time children are conceived through the use of alcohol or drugs of some type where the girl is not as aware of what is happening."

Knowledge is what Nicholls thinks is most essential. "We have to train our young people so they know that if you drink or do drugs while you are pregnant there is a lot of damage. I think we need to do a lot of work there, including at school."

As someone who has seen and dealt with FAS children, Nicholls believes that community action is in order and that families need "to make sure that they get the information and share it with both their sons and daughters."

**"We have to train our young people
so they know that if you drink
or do drugs while you are preg-
nant there is a lot of damage"**

"I raised three boys but I didn't think, 'Oh well, they will never get into trouble because they are boys.' They can also contribute to fetal alcohol effects. If it's in their systems then they can be transmitting it to the womb. We know that now. We did not know that before. The girl might not be the sole member who is affecting the baby; it can also be the father."

Most importantly, she could not stress enough the importance of families taking care of each other as a means of preventing FAS. "I think we should take a good look at the children and especially the girls. You know, keep them beside you for a while. They need some training... morals are very low right now and I think parents should be very aware and these young girls need to be taken care of up to a certain age and then they can decide on their own [about sex]."

Above all, if you think that your child may be suffering from Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Nicholls cautioned, "Don't hide in the bush!"



The Cree Indian Center of Chibougamau

would like to thank all the sponsors and the participants who contributed to the success of the "25th Indian Day" that was presented on July 7, 8, 9 on the shore of Gilman Lake.

See you again next year!



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The deadline for updates is October 31st.

Meegwetch.



MONEY FOR WASWANIPi SCHOOL ANNOUNCED

by Amy German

EDUCATION BECOMING GROWTH ENGINE FOR COMMUNITY

The Quebec government will fund the construction of a new elementary school in Waswanipi.

The office of Premier Jean Charest announced August 9 that the government will spend \$8.4 million for a school that can accommodate 260 students. It will have 16 classes, five specialized rooms, a gymnasium and a library.

Abraham Jolly of the Cree School Board said the premier's announcement was met with great joy among community members who had been vying for the new school for a long time.

"There is a bit of a trend where some of the communities are requesting to have separate schools for the elementary and the secondary levels," said Jolly. With Waswanipi's growing population this announcement comes just in time to meet growing demands, Jolly explained.

It also comes amid a flurry of other education-related spending announcements by Quebec's Liberal government in the run-up to an anticipated general election.

Along with the announcement for the elementary school, Charest noted it has granted a subsidy of \$4,450,000 to the Cree School Board to build 21 residences, including two semi-detached

units and a triplex in Mistissini (\$1.1 million), a triplex in Oujé-Bougoumou (\$420,000), two semidetached units and a triplex in Chisasibi (\$1.9 million) and two semidetached units in Waswanipi (\$680,000). The total amount also covers acquisition of furniture and equipment for these dwellings.

"Again, that is all within the Cree School Board and these housing units are for teachers and for administrative staff," said Jolly.

According to a statement from the premier's office, the elementary school project will help make up for a shortfall of 104 student places. "This project will free up space at Willie J. Happyjack School, which currently dispenses elementary and secondary education. The space could be used for adult education, as well as for Cree culture classes and alternative education."

Jolly said that the space has not been earmarked yet for one specific function. "That is what we are looking at now but we have to do a little planning to determine how we are going to use the vacant space in that school," he said.

With other recent additions, Waswanipi is a rapidly developing town. "I think Waswanipi has been faced with the

construction of the vocational training centre being completed in 2005 and now with this other project like this, it will have an economic impact," said Jolly.

The Sabtuan Regional Vocational Centre can accommodate up to 100 students. Because the institution's housing is designed to accommodate not only single students but also married couples and small families, Waswanipi's need for a new elementary school is even greater.

Said Jolly: "I think Waswanipi is set to jump to the forefront of education services. This will play a big factor in the community."

Though there is no date set for the completion of the elementary school, plans are well underway, says Jolly. He expects construction to begin in the spring of 2007.

"The young people who attend elementary school today are the builders of tomorrow's society," Charest said in the statement released by his office. "We must provide them with educational services that foster development of their full potential. Furthermore, schools are institutions that contribute significantly to the vitality of the community where they are located."

continued from page 11

here," says Colette. "The students are housed and fed because we provide meals for them, too."

The other half of the school is comprised of local students from Waswanipi.

The two most popular programs at the vocational centre at the moment are, according to Colette, secretarial studies and professional cooking. "Secretarial studies are very popular because the Cree School Board is growing so there is going to be a large demand on this level."

Professional cooking is also popular because of its job prospects. "There are community centres, public residences and elder residences that are in need of cooks. There is a large demand for cooks in various Cree communities. We are even thinking about integrating some

traditional cultural cooking."

Whether you are bored with what you are presently doing, have just had a major life change or are just finishing up school and are preparing for the future, Waswanipi's vocational training centre has plenty to offer to just about anyone. "We even have some students here that are 40 years old and it's open to everyone in the nine communities," enthuses Colette.

For more information or to print out a registration form, go to:

<http://www.cscree.qc.ca/Vocational/Vocational1.htm> or call (819) 753-4040 local or 1-866-921-4040 toll free.



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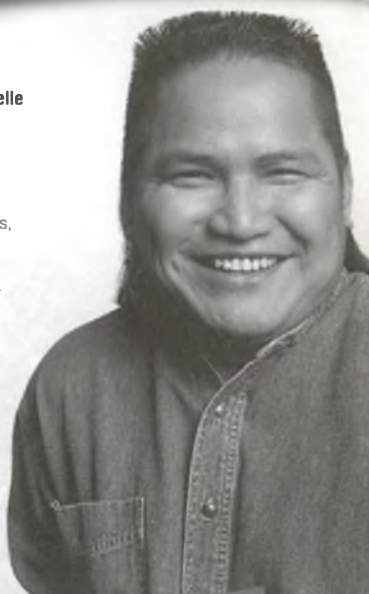
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SCREEN SHOTS

Summer Movie Lineup – September

by The Shadow Critics



Accepted – This is a movie about a graduating high school student being rejected by every college he has applied to. Most of his friends are being rejected as well. So, not wanting to miss out on the college experience, he creates a college of his own out of an old, abandoned mental hospital. He gets a tech-wise friend to create a website and all the trappings of a real college. He starts accepting his friends so they will have a place to

go, but suddenly people start showing up from everywhere to attend. It is one of those end-of-the-summer movies that remind us all of why we wanted to go to college in the first place (okay, well, those other reasons besides getting an education).



The Ballad of Ricky Bobby – For fans of Will Ferrell and NASCAR, this will likely be a good choice for a summer comedy. Ricky Bobby is a baby born and raised in the fast lane. He excels at one of the most popular sports in the U.S., and along the way gives us much to laugh about in this satire about a man who makes it to the top of the NASCAR racing world.



World Trade Center – This Nicolas Cage movie is about the firefighters and police who rushed to the World Trade Center on the morning of the Sept. 11, 2001, attack. It is based on the true story of two New York Port Authority police officers, Will Jimeno and John McLoughlin, who become trapped inside the rubble of the World Trade Center while trying to rescue others. The movie will be

intense and emotional, as rescuers race against time to free the two before their air runs out.



The Ant Bully – A little boy name Lucas recently moved to a new town. He has no friends, his family is absorbed in their own plans, and the neighbourhood bully has decided to target the new kid. So he starts to destroy ant hills to vent his frustration. The ants devise a concoction to shrink Lucas down to their size by pouring a drop in his ear. He is then taken by them down into their

world to stand trial for the destruction of their homes. He is sentenced to live among them and work until he learns a lesson from them.



The Illusionist – This movie comes from the producers of *Sideways* and *Crash*, both big hits over the past two years. The illusionist is a stage musician played by Edward Norton, who falls in love with Jessica Biel, a beautiful woman already spoken for by a Crown Prince. Paul Giamatti plays a chief inspector who is pitted against Norton to make sense of the world of illusion he creates,

which seems to blur reality.



Zoom – Tim Allen stars as a retired superhero who is asked to teach at a school for young superheroes-in-training. The four principal superheroes-in-training Zoom is to teach are: 1) Houdini, who has the gift of invisibility; 2) Princess is a cute little girl with superhuman strength; 3) Wonder, who has telepathic powers and can levitate; and, 4) Mega Boy, who has the ability to blow up

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UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

MAKING IT RIGHT

by Xavier Kataquapit

This summer I had the opportunity to participate in events surrounding the Treaty #9 Centennial Commemorations with communities in the Wabun Tribal Council area. I had the chance to meet many people and to listen to what our First Nation leaders are saying about the past 100 years of the treaty between our people and the government of Canada.

When I listened to our leaders and our Elders at these events I was really happy and surprised in a way to find that their words were not bitter or angry about this history. I was proud of the fact that our people are capable of moving forward through hard times and difficulties without being brought down by negative feelings about the past.

As our leaders pointed out, there has been great disappointment since the Treaty #9 document was signed 100 years ago. This treaty and others like it across Canada were initiated by the federal government, not First Nations people. We were pretty much forced to accept these treaties and as a result we ended up living on remote and isolated reserves. The treaty signing turned First Nation people into wards of the crown and to a great degree it took away our way of life. In addition, our culture and identity were systematically taken away from us. A new religion was imposed on us and we were not allowed to practice our traditions. Our children were taken away to residential schools where they were abused in many ways. However, even after the process of being converted, we were still recognized as visible minorities and we had a hard time living in this new world. There was racism and bigotry just about everywhere in those early times.

As a result of the coming of the Europeans and all of these changes my people had many hard years and our First Nations became sad places, with much alcoholism and dysfunction. You would think our leaders would be angry.

First Nation political representatives such as Shawn Batise, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council; his father Barney Batise, an Elder and Grand Chief Stan Beardy, Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) see the past as something we can't change. Their message is that we have to put those years behind us and move ahead. They suggest that we must not forget the past but we should look to the future with some hope. We must renew our original friendship based on trust with the idea that the government of Canada will live up to their promises made in so many treaties.

Many people don't understand the fact that these treaties were established on the idea that we would share the land and its resources in a good and fair way. It wasn't supposed to be about First Nation people being locked up on small pieces of land where there would be no opportunity to grow and develop. For most of the past 100 years we have been out of the loop while all of the resource development on or around our traditional lands took place. Lots of people made a lot of money but in general First Nations did not benefit. The fact is that the Treaty # 9 was supposed to be about fairness and sharing and that just never happened.

The world we live in is different these days. The kind of racism and bigotry that was prevalent only 40 years ago has dissipated to a great degree. However, it has not gone completely. Life is a little better for my people but that hasn't come without us fighting for our lives. First we had to survive the arrival of the European people and the new world they introduced. Secondly we had to grow to the point where we could educate ourselves so that we would be able to continue to survive in this world.

Now we have many First Nation people who have grown to become lawyers, business people, political leaders and administrators. There are also many First Nation organizations that are staffed with bright and dedicated First Nation people. They are all working to take the government to task to fight for our communities and our people. We can't just be cast aside anymore or be ignored and that makes me feel good about our future.

The sharing of the land and its resources does not mean that First Nation people want more than anyone else. All we want is the fairness that was promised 100 years ago. That means that as we become more open to resource developments on our lands we expect to benefit by these initiatives. This also means there is a lot of work ahead. Our people have to acquire the training and education to take advantage of opportunities that are coming our way in this new millennium. It is time to develop our own economies so that we can become self-sufficient and rely less on outside sources or the government for assistance.

It is important that people try to understand that when First Nations benefit from developments on their lands it is a good thing. It is only fair. We can't cry about the past but we can strive to make it right for the next 100 years.

EMPLOYMENT



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Posting period: September 4, 2006 to September 15, 2006
End of posting: September 15, 2006 at 1PM (Eastern Time)

RESULTS of the 10TH ANNUAL MISTISSINI POLICE FISHING DERBY

by Jeff Spencer

For the past 10 years the Mistissini Police have hosted an Annual Fishing Derby for the community of Mistissini and visitors. There are prizes to be won and stories to be told but the main focus is children and their well-being. Each year there is an organization or event selected as the beneficiary of the event.

The 10th Annual Police Fishing Derby has graciously decided to give all the proceeds from this year's event to the Children's Football Camp.

A few years ago our community was blessed with the arrival of Mr. Gord Hudson. A former pro athlete, Mr. Hudson, known to all as "Gordie" or that big football guy, saw the potential of our children and youth to be part of something and approached some people with the idea of bringing a pro team to Mistissini. The purpose would be not only to assist the Youth in sport but also in life as well teaching teamwork, lessons on drugs and alcohol and staying in school.

In 2004 and 2005 the Ottawa Renegades' coach and Gordie's former teammate, Joe PaoPao, came to Mistissini. This year, with the folding of the Renegades, Gordie refused to cancel and with his perseverance and charm of course (maybe even a bit of size) brought the Montreal Alouettes and their coach Don Matthews here, continuing this great annual event.

Thank you Gordie and the Mistissini police officers for your continued care and support of our youth!

Mistissini Police would like to present you the official results of the 10th Annual Fishing Derby held August 18-20. This event was a great success due to the overwhelming number of participants - 661 people total. As well, there was \$50,000 in prizes to be won including the raffle for the 16' Princecraft with 75 hp motor. Thank you over and over to the sponsors and businesses that donated to this great event. This year, we are pleased to announce that a donation has been made to the Children's Football Camp in the amount of \$14,400 from registrations and the boat draw proceeds.

WINNERS OF 10TH ANNUAL MISTISSINI POLICE FISHING DERBY:

PIKE:

- 1st 26.5 Lbs (RECORD) Kenny Gunner
- 2nd 22.0 Lbs Samuel Mianscum
- 3rd 20.1 Lbs Nigel Gunner



LAKE TROUT:

- 1st 6.4 Lbs J. Neeposh
- 2nd 5.7 Lbs Liam Quinn
- 3rd 5.4 Lbs C. Neeposh



SPECKLE TROUT:

- 1st 4.7 Lbs Norman Neeposh
- 2nd 4.6 Lbs Tony Petawabano
- 3rd 4.5 Lbs Andy Iserhoff (Tammy)



COMBINED WEIGHT

- 38.4 Lbs (RECORD) Kenny Gunner

- PIKE: 26.5 Lbs
- WALLEYE: 3.5 Lbs
- LAKE TROUT: 5.3 Lbs
- SPEC. TROUT: 3.1 Lbs



WALLEYE:

- 1st 6.2 Lbs (RECORD) Alexandre Brien
- 2nd 4.6 Lbs Luc Pichete
- 3rd 4.5 Lbs Darren Loon

Being a special year, the 10th anniversary, in addition to the Annual Champions Trophy Kenny Gunner also won a 19-foot canoe.

10th ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL BOAT RAFFLE

In addition to the prize for the combined weight, there was a special prize raffle for a boat, motor and trailer. There were 30 names entered into a blind elimination. The winner of the Boat Raffle was Mr. Darryl Gunner.

Thank you to all participants and sponsors for making this the greatest derby ever.



CLASSIFIEDS

BIRTHDAYS - 101

I would like to wish a happy 19th birthday to my brother Patrick Martinhunter, on Aug 11/06

Love Ya Bro...I Hope You Had Fun In Mistissini On Ur Birthday! Love Ur Babysitter.

I would like to wish my niece Tara-lee Martinhunter a happy 7th birthday on August 14,06 I love you Daushe and hope your day was fun as last year... Or even funner..lol Well happy 7th Birthday Girl!!!! Love, Auntie Merissa Martinhunter(K)

Wishing a happy b-day to my best-friend Queenie Janice Maggie Neeposh Ottereyes on August 11/06 also happy Anniversary to you Queenie and Harry Ottereyes on August 11/06. best wishes and many happy years together from your friend Rachel Longchap (in Wask)

I wanted to wish a happy b-day to my niece turning 19 I think her name is Melissa Jane Dixon in Waswanipi on August 4/06. Have fun on your b-day .take-care love ya miss ya oh yeah, congratulations on your graduations too you did it! I'm so proud of you .bye see you soon with love from Auntie in Waswaganish Rachel.

We would like to wish a Happy Birthday to our Dad Gordon Diamond on August 30. Happy B-day Dad and we love you From Rowan And Darien. Wask...

I would like 2 wish happy birthday 2 my Aunt Leeanne Rose Jolly and Erica Cynthia Crystal House....Their special day is on August 13....I hope u ladies don't party too much GOH.....lol.....anyways I don't have much 2 say....TAKE CAREFROM G WASK

Happy Birthday to Elizabeth Herodier on August 10, love you mom, moosh. Happy Birthday to Roderick Herodier on August 22, love you. Have a nice day. From: Christopher Jr. and Sr. Also, Happy Anniversary on August 23, love you, have a good one.

We would like to wish Sarah Herodier a very Happy Birthday on August 20, have a good birthday and we love you very much. From your boys and c.h.

Happy Anniversary to Sarah Herodier on August 23, from your husband Christopher, love you always and I wish you the best only on your anniversary. Have a good day and we love you very much too, from your boys also. Almost forgot, Happy Birthday to you from all your family on August 20, we love you so much, never forget that.

A year from today God gave us the gift of our son, Daniel Richard Douglas Ashigoomabinoshkum House. We

remember the day you were born. The first time we held you in our arms. Today my son, you turn 1 on August 24. We want to thank God for giving us the honour of raising such a handsome baby boy. You are now walking and giving us so much joy. We love you with all our hearts. Happy 1st birthday Danny Boy! Love Always, Mom & Dad (Heather House & Dwayne Jonah)

We would like to send a happy b-day to a very special lady Myra Longchap on August 21/06. We miss you, and I hope you'll have a special day on your b-day. We'd love to see you soon, bye with lots of love, Rachel and Ryan I would like to say Happy 1st Birthday to my grand-nephew Dreydon Gilpin in Eastmain, Quebec

I'm sorry I can't be there for your birthday, my chubb chubb. Know that i'll be there in spirit celebrating your day with you, my baby you in my thoughts always in my heart forever, I will see you in Montreal when you come down again happy birthday and many more to come love always great-auntie Joanne (goo goo jo to you my baby love) oh! I almost forgot his will be Saturday August 26th.

Belated Birthday wishes going out to our beautiful little girl.Joy-Lynn Shecapio. A happy 2nd birthday on August 4, 2006, and many more to come. Love Mom, Charlotte, Dad, Larry.

Happy 6th birthday going out to my niece Andrea Weistche on August 18, 2006 I'm sure your day

was special as you are!! Happy birthday and many more birthdays to come! I Love You!!!

Love Auntie Norma

Happy birthday to the greatest brother any sister would love to have, (but we got him) our bro Morley Jr Etapp on August 26. It seems like yesterday since all played together in the park as kids, now we all got children of our own, time sure flies. On this day of yours reflect on who you are and how you came to be and all the opportunities that lie ahead, we're so proud to call you our brother. We love you.. enjoy your day and have fun, love from your 4 sisters, Rach, Angela, Tanya and Mel...xoxo (I know you love us too..lol) Happy belated birthday going out to our cousin Andrea Weistche on August 18,2006. Celebrated her 6th birthday. Happy birthday again Andrea!!! Love, Justin, Justine and Justina (Wask)

To my daughter Andrea Weistche. Happy birthday Danshee! I'm sorry this is late. I love you so much, you brighten up my days, lighten up my nights when skies are grey, you are my sunshine, you are my angel, my mira-

cle Love you lots from Mom Sarah (Waskaganish)

Ok! I'm always mixed up on these birthdays in September...lol Happy birthday to my childhood friends, Jessica Otter, on September 5, and Maxine Gull Blacksmith, on September 11, I hope I got these birthdays right. I still can't remember which one's birthday is on the 5th and on the 11th...Isn't it amazing that all our birthdays are all in September?. Well anyways have a happy 27th birthdays to you! Luv ya & miss ya Jess! Love always your friend MGNeeosh XoX

I would like to wish a happy belated ?? birthday to my friend Christina J. Cooper, On August 21 2006. Hope your day was special as you are. Well anyways. Take care my friend; From MGullNeeosh (Waswanipi)

ANNIVERSARIES - 103

Happy Anniversary to my brother David and Yvette Longchap on August 4/06. Happy Anniversary love you both with all my heart. I miss you guys from Rachel (Wask)

I would like to take this time to wish a happy 2nd Anniversary to my loving and beautiful wife Annika on Aug. 21 , Love always, Ghislain.

To my husband, Samuel Mettaweskum from Nemaska. Happy 25th Anniversary on September 5, 2006. I thank God for you, I love you and I hope we grow old together. I thank God everyday for helping us out in our struggles and getting us through. I thank God for the children (Priscilla, Jesse & Patrick) he gave us and I hope they make the right choices in life. May God bless you today & always. Love & Prayers Evadney.

Happy 16th Anniversary to my husband Wilbert Shecapio on August 24,2006 I love you so much with all my heart.fr. your wife Margaret L Shecapio

We would like to wish a Happy 3rd Anniversary to our friends, Cuzn, Angela and Dale Petawabano, on

August 23, 2006. Wishing you both so much much more happiness and so much joy throughout your years together. May the Good Lord guide you both. Love and Prayers: your friends, Cuzn, Melanie and Sinclair Neeposh and Family XoX

PERSONAL - 300

To my MON AMOUR, I would like to thank you for being there for me when needed. You are my heart beat and my breath that I take. You have given me the best thing in life "a miracle". I will always think of you in my dreams and my heart. You will never be forgotten. Loving you has brought joy back into my life. Thank You. Sweetwater XOX

I would like to congratulate Waskaganish Fire Dept. on becoming the Provincial Champions 2006, and I wish the best of Luck for your team going to Prince Albert Sask. for the National Competitions. Ghislain.

Val-d'Or - Looking to share a 2 bedroom apartment for Fall session with College or University female student. The rent is \$500/mth utilities not included. The apartment is located near UQAM University of Val-d'Or (5 min. walk). A computer is also available with fast speed internet services. Responsible persons reply only. For more info, you may contact me through e-mail : wikipiza@hotmail.com Meegwetch Jane Wabie Val-d'Or

Public Service Announcements - 400

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal now has a 1-800 number. You can now reach us toll-free at: 1-866-403-4688. Please check out the new website at: www.nwsm.info and feel free to give us any feedback.

Do you need help? Someone to talk to? Call the Kid's Help Phone's toll-free number, at: 1-800-668-6868 or check out their website at: www.kidshelp.sympatico.ca.

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RAPTORS ALL-STAR BASKETBALL

COMPETITION & TOURNAMENT SEPTEMBER 8TH TO 10TH 2006

The Cree Nation of Mistissini, the Cree Regional Authority, the Grand Council of the Crees, the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay and the Cree School Board are proud to present a weekend of fun and sports with the Raptors.

Guests include players and coaches of the Toronto Raptors, who will give free clinics.



Participants to all camps and teams need to register with the Cree Nation of Mistissini Recreation Department.

Contact:

John Gosset, Mistissini Recreation Department 418-923-3461
Gordon Hudson, Youth Healing Services 418-923-3600



Cree Nation
of Mistissini



Grand Council of the Crees
(Eeyou Istchee)
Grand conseil des Cris
(Eeyou Istchee)



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Administration régionale Crie



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Commission scolaire Crie



Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay
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